



# The Late Hector Kipling

*David Thewlis*

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## **The Late Hector Kipling** David Thewlis

Hector Kipling is a famous artist. But Hector is not as famous as his best friend, Lenny Snook. And as they are standing in the Tate Gallery one afternoon, Hector's life begins to unravel. For a painter, this existential crisis is the place from which great art is born. If the painter happens to be a forty-three-year-old man with a girlfriend away from home, it is the recipe for disaster.

Soon it's all Hector can do to keep it together -- between his therapist who shows up drunk at a party and introduces herself to his parents, an irresistible young female poet with a terrifying taste for S&M, and a deranged stalker with an oil-and-canvas-inspired vendetta, just trying to cope is enough to make a man cry.

As the events in his life threaten to drive him toward full-blown dementia, Hector finds himself in a bizarre and murderous pursuit of a man threatening to kill him in return, spiraling into a hysterically surreal Hitchcocklike thriller -- the story of how a man can become desperate enough to shoot his way out of a midlife crisis.

At turns warm, witty, and joyfully absurd, David Thewlis's wicked comedy marks the debut of a savagely funny and observant literary talent.

## **The Late Hector Kipling Details**

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# From Reader Review The Late Hector Kipling for online ebook

## Pica says

In the interest of full disclosure, I confess that the reason this book caught my eye, and the reason I checked it out from the library in the first place, is that it was written by the actor who played Remus Lupin -- my favourite character -- in the Harry Potter movies. He brought such wonderful qualities to the character that I was curious to see how his creativity would play out on the printed page. I'll gladly give this book its props. It's an interesting story, and the style is excellent and consistent, with lots of black humour and clear intelligence, but I'm sorry to say that I just didn't get on with the story all that well. I started out feeling a bit sorry for poor Hector, an artist having a bit of a mid-life crisis, whose own creativity is overshadowed by the recognition and acclaim of his best friend. His biggest complaint seems to be that he feels his art lacks depth because, at forty-three, he's never really known anyone who died. But as the story progresses, and Kipling digs himself in deeper and deeper, making stupid choices and telling obvious and damaging lies to everyone in his life, my sympathy waned. Kipling's life quickly spirals out of control, facilitated by a dapper psychopath who seems even more hellbent on destroying his life than Kipling himself is (trust me; he doesn't need much help). By the last third of the book, I found myself thinking that Kipling's best option was to just top himself and get it over with before he destroyed the lives of everyone around him.

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## Devon says

This is the kind of book that you just can't keep to yourself. I found myself constantly looking for someone to share passages with. Some of it was just too funny to keep to myself and some of it was just too insightful....some of it was both. All of the characters are familiar enough to hit home and insane enough to be absurd.

Experiencing the novel through Hector's eyes, in first person, is really the best part of the whole thing. It gives the novel a very personal feeling. It's almost as if the reader is having a conversation with Hector, as if he were a good friend you hadn't talked to in a few years and the two of you are catching up.

Sometimes Hector is rude and completely gives you too much detail, sometimes he hushes things up and doesn't tell you enough, and sometimes his descriptions leave you absolutely breathless.

Thewlis is an absolutely terrific author, in my opinion. It's very hard to believe that it's his debut novel. Such an intense, personal novel that makes you actually say, "Woah!" out loud at a few points is an incredible achievement even for the experienced.

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## Emily says

Well, huh. This definitely was an interesting read. Strange is a word I'd use to describe the actual plot. Dead on is how I'd describe the narration (though I suppose it would be rather tongue in cheek of me to do so).

The voice of the work I'm in love with and hence, the star rating. There were parts I laughed out loud at, which is somewhat rare. But Mr. Thewlis definitely created a living breathing person in Hector Kipling, and

to a varied extent, the other cast of characters.

I wasn't as enamored by the pacing, which felt too fast at times and not fast enough at others (though, I admit, this could be as designed considering the first person pov and the progression of the character himself).

I'm glad to have read this, though, and look forward to anything else he writes.

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### **ERIN SCHMIDT says**

David Thewlis is a clever guy, and he knows a lot about the art world. I can imagine that this novel was written by the character he plays (briefly) in 'The Big Lebowski.' (But it's more fun to imagine this is a novel WRITTEN BY REMUS LUPIN.) The ending was a bit unexpected, but I suppose it's a statement about the irony of any artist calling another artist a thief, since creative theft is essentially the definition of art.

I hope David Thewlis writes more novels.

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### **CF says**

This is brilliant. Thewlis' style of writing is fresh and unlike anything I have read. The story is very good.

Hector Kipling is an artist, who, seemingly, is searching for the perfect type of sorrow.

No one in his family has died, and when his girlfriend Eleni's mother gets severely burnt in an accident, he is jealous that she gets to experience the kind of sadness that he has been wanting to feel. While back in her homeland of Crete, he begins an affair with an American poet called Rosa. Her sadistic style and tendency to flirt with his friends puts him ill at ease.

Hector's odd descent into madness begins when one of his friends die, and, instead of finding the sorrow he wants, he doesn't seem to care. Things start going worse and worse for Hector, and his personality warps and changes throughout the story. Incredibly explosive ending as well. You never know what is going to happen next in this book. Highly recommended!

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### **Rowan MacBean says**

Well, that was ... weird. XD Which is to be expected, I think. Thewlis strikes me as a pretty weird guy so it makes sense that the story he felt the need to tell would be so bizarre. The summary's use of the word "surreal" hits the nail directly on the head, in my opinion, but because truth really is stranger than fiction so often, nothing that happens is truly unbelievable. It's perhaps a little unbelievable that it all happens to one guy, but even that...? Dude, some people just get shit on all the time.

I quite enjoy the way David Thewlis writes. There were almost no characters at all that I actually liked but I still found them all fascinating and I never once lost interest in what was happening or would happen to any of them. And his dialogue... It's realistic! Sometimes it looks a little shoddy on the page, but you know what? Listen to people talk. Dialogue is shoddy. And none of the rest of his writing can be described that way, so I figure it's got to be on purpose. If it's not ... well, isn't he lucky then, because it works out really nicely. XD

Even though I liked this book, I'm not giving it a universal recommendation because it's most definitely not for everyone. You have to have the right kind of sense of humor -- a dark one -- and you have to be able to understand satire, sarcasm and actual irony. Sadly, most people don't. I've got a better grasp on those concepts than the average person, if I do say so myself, and even I had a few moments in this book where I laughed at a wrong moment or realized belatedly that I should have laughed at something and didn't. This book also isn't for people who like everything all wrapped up in a neat package with a bow on top. I also don't recommend it to fans of happy or even just satisfying endings.

So I repeat: I really enjoyed *The Late Hector Kipling*. But I'd say others should read at their own risk.

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### **Rachel says**

such shit rambles on like a mad man. took me nearly two years to finish it!

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### **Chloe says**

This is my most favourite book in the whole world.

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### **Tiffany says**

David Thewlis was a writer before he was an actor. This shows, in his novel *The Late Hector Kipling*. Most authors want their narrators or main storyteller to be a hero, or at least someone you like or want to be. Not Thewlis. In the tradition of *Catcher in the Rye*, the narrator is a complete antagonist. He is someone you wouldn't want to know. This does not make the book unreadable, however, but perhaps even more so, as you really want him to come to his senses, but no, he is a selfish, self-serving arse and just when you think he can't get any worse, he does. This causes a lot of humour in the tale of the main character and his friends, despite that one is dying... I await the next effort of literature from Mr. Thewlis with eagerness...

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### **Margo says**

I loved this book. Who knew that David Thewlis could write better than he could act (and I think he is a fantastic actor). You can tell there is a lot of him in this, and some of the manic-ness of his character Johnny in Mike Leigh's *Naked*. But, besides that, this book is intense, and I like how it deals with the art world, putting it in a new and gritty light. The characterization is wonderful and after finishing I was stunned for days.

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### **Shannon says**

My goodness, if this isn't one of the best stories I've ever read I'm not sure what is. *The Late Hector Kipling* follows the artist Hector Kipling as his life goes from perfection to destruction. Much more than a simple

mid life crisis the downfall of Hector Kipling is orchestrated by himself and others until he has nothing left.

David Thewlis did an amazing job capturing characters, locations and plots, as well as the feeling and motivations behind everything. His prose is something to be celebrated by just how artful and poetic it is.

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### **Hanna says**

Quirky, contemporary, a dark, tongue-in-cheek look at the competitive world of high art. Good voice but the first person/present tense style wears thin after a while; it's a strain to carry all the nuances of motive and action but such is the burden of the present tense. Enjoyed it the first time through, reads fairly quick once you get used to the style but it's not something I would idly re-read in a hurry. That said, it is merely the author's first novel and I will keep an eye out for any further novels he writes.

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### **Marina says**

4.5?

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### **Owl says**

Ich fand es unheimlich zäh zu lesen.

Eigentlich dachte ich immer, mein Englisch wäre ok. Mit anderen englischen Büchern hatte ich jedenfalls noch nie so großartige Probleme. Aber dieses hier hat mich echt geschafft.

Zum einen lag das an den "Spezialwörtern" (wie z.B. unser deutscher "Edding". Das ist eigentlich die Marke und nicht der Stift selber, aber jeder weiß, was mit Edding gemeint ist; auch wenn der entsprechende Gegenstand nicht von dieser Firma / Marke sein sollte.) Aber die erklärten sich mir größtenteils aus dem Zusammenhang.

Aber der gute Mann schreibt so wahnsinnig verschwurbelt und leider, leider merkt man dem Buch an, dass der Autor sehr lange dafür gebraucht hat (ich meine etwas von 9 Jahren gelesen zu haben) bzw. sehr lange Pausen eingelegt hat. Aufgefallen sind mir Anspielungen und "Szenen" aus Filmen, in denen David Thewlis mitgespielt hat.

Die Sprache war mir einfach zu "fuck"-lastig. Weniger ist da oft mehr.

Die letzten ~80 Seiten fand ich recht ansprechend und viel flüssiger erzählt als der ganze Rest davor.

Vielleicht sollte ich mir überlegen, die übersetzte Version (so es eine gibt) zu lesen, um auch wirklich zu kapieren, um was es genau geht und was genau passiert.

So 100%ig bin ich nämlich nicht dahinter gestiegen.

Also, Mr. Thewlis sollte den Beruf des Autors nie als alleiniges Standbein in Erwägung ziehen.

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### **Kiera says**

3.5 stars.

